

[Oct. 1, 1998]

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CM JG AA OS NF CF

THE WEEKLY UPDATE

bleary-eyed style

by Lydia Linker & Lee Montgomery

Vol 2, Issue 2

Welcome to week #2 of our new semester and newish format of the Weekly Update. You can infer from the last issue that there are a plethora of issues to be discussed this semester

This week's topic, brought to you by Lydia is:

"I'M AN UNDERGRAD AND I DON'T KNOW WHERE MY PROGRAM DIRECTOR WENT"

At the end of last year's Spring semester (1998), it was known that the Graduate Program Director, Pegan Brooke, and the Letters & Sciences Program Director, Bill Berkson, were taking their sabbaticals this semester. It was at this time that the formal announcement that the Undergraduate Program Director and L&S Program Director positions were to be eliminated. Simultaneously, Larry Thomas (the Dean of Academic Affairs) announced his need for an extra set of hands, or an Associate Dean, if you will.

A pattern becomes clear, here, and the result of these "serindipidous" coincidences is that instead of two part-time, artist faculty members (Reagan Louie and Bill Berkson) filling the positions of Undergraduate Program Director and L&S Program Director we get one brand spanking new Associate Dean position whose responsibilities will include not only Reagan and Bill's old jobs, but also the responsibilities that Larry needs in a new associate (to my knowledge, this has to do with more accreditation type scrutiny). This sounds fairly straightforward and not very problematic, right?.....

To start off with, you may very well ask why Reagan or Bill weren't offered this Associate Dean position [or maybe even Catherine Lipsetz, who currently assists both of them. See the "Turnover Watch" - LeE]. The reason they were not offered the job, I am told, is that these guys are members of the faculty and were filling these positions on a temporary part-time basis. The infamous "they" want to keep them as faculty members, whereas the Associate Dean position would be best suited to an outsider whose main focus would be management oriented rather than teaching oriented.

Ok, so where is this new Associate Dean?

I'm not quite sure where Larry is within the hiring process. (I hope there's a hiring committee made up of all elements of the Art Institute including staff, faculty, and students.) At this time, I believe there is a group of potential candidates selected via resume.

Before anyone jumps on Larry's back for the amount of time this process seems to be taking, let's keep in mind that while there is no Associate Dean to help out Larry's work load, it is Larry, himself, carrying the responsibilities of his over extended position that now includes Undergraduate Program Director and L&S Program Director. This all just makes me wonder why Larry seems to be put in a position of taking on all this work, including hiring his associate, and why all of this wasn't planned out more carefully over the summer?

The final point (and perhaps the most important one) that is raised when looking at this re-vamping of a managerial position that deals directly with student curriculum, is this: If each department appointing it's own chairs supposedly didn't work, and broadly appointed program directors supposedly didn't work any better than that, what makes the proverbial "them" think that only one person taking on the responsibilities of many, (or, in the case of now, no one filling the position) is a better, more smoothly run system than the previous systems? When one "chair" from each department was able to communicate to the community the needs and responsibilities of their individual departments, the department chair system created a more interdisciplinary system of communication, and provided more checks and balances.

Whose best interest is being kept in mind? Is the students' education being compromised by the current unstable direction of the program? And what of the faculty if faculty isn't seen as competent enough to direct their own program?

Tune in next time to find out more about faculty issues such as their projected positions being "reNEWed" (or will they?).

TURNOVER WATCH: '98

As "the weekly update" pointed out in a column last week, and as Glen Helfand, of the Guardian so astutely pointed out in his brief article on the Art Institute's president, the San Francisco Art Institute has a terribly high staff turnover rate. Whether this is the result of our president's "East Coast" management style or not is still up for debate, but we here at "the weekly update" want to keep track of this phenomenon as closely as possible.

So.... starting from 2 years ago when the high turnover rate was just a small tropical storm, this space will list all the victims of Hurricane Turnover.

You might notice some new additions since last week. Two of those names left in the last two weeks. The others we forgot to include in our first list.

ROY RAMSING, film dept. manager
JIM SIEBERT, asst. dept. mgr., film
JACLYN WHITE, night mgr, film
EDUARDO MORRELL, asst mgr, intermedia
TOM LAPORTA, head of maintenance
FRANK BARFIELD, asst. head of maintenance
JEANNIE WIEFFENBACH, McBean gallery director
DINA SORENSON, general services co-ordinator
TRISH HERMANN, human resources
CHRISSY GODFREY, human resources
PATRICIA GRICE, vice president
ROSANNA DeROBLES, asst. to v.p.
JUDY CHAPMAN, director of student services

and -- just announced

DANNY SHORAGO, mail-room asst.
CATHERINE LIPSETZ, asst for academic programs

After reading all of these names, you may wonder if we'll ever be able to get anyone to work at the art institute. Well, rest assured that there are plenty of vacant positions that have needed to be filled for months now. And remember, this list is incomplete. Check this space next week for the latest additions.

T H I S S P A C E W I T H W I L L B E F I L L E D W I T H Y O U R S U B M I S S I O N S

Mailboxes you can submit to:

The Philistine
(in the mailroom)

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